

Message Text

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1. HERewith FULL TEXT RICHARD T. SALE FRONT PAGE BYLINER
WASHINGTON POST FRIDAY MAY 13 HEADED "ARMS QUARRELS STRAIN
U.S.-IRAN TIES."

2. WHEN GEN. HASSAN TOUFANIAN, IRAN'S CHIEF ARMS-PROCURE-
MENT OFFICER, ARRIVED IN WASHINGTON IN LATE JANUARY 1976,
HE WAS IN A CONSTRAINED RAGE AND BEARING THE SHAH'S PER-
SONAL INSTRUCTIONS.

3. FOR MONTHS, IRAN'S DISCONTENT WITH ITS U.S. ARMS DEALS
HAD BEEN BUILDING. INFLATED SPARE PARTS AND SERVICE COSTS,
PROGRAM OVERRUNS, DELAYS, RISING PRICES--THE SITUATION
HAD BECOME INTOLERABLE TO THE SHAH.
UNCLASSIFIED

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4. JAN. 19, MEETING OVER A PENTAGON LUNCH WITH SECRETARY
OF DEFENSE DONALD H. RUMSFELD, TOUFANIAN BITTERLY EXPRESSED
THE SHAH'S DISCONTENT. ACCORDING TO IRANIAN SOURCES,
RUMSFELD INSULTED THE SHAH'S REPRESENTATIVE, UNDOUBTEDLY
NOT REALIZING THAT FOR IRANIANS, IT WAS TANTAMOUNT TO
INSULTING THE SHAH HIMSELF.

5. RUMSFELD RESPONDED TO TOUFANIAN'S COMPLAINTS BY SAYING
THE DIFFICULTY WAS THAT IRAN WAS CORRUPT, ACCORDING TO
PERSONS WHO HAVE READ IRANIAN INTERNAL REPORTS OF THE MEET-

ING. TOUFANIAN REPLIED THAT RUMSFELD WAS "UNINFORMED" AND "NOT HIS OWN MAN."

6. TOUFANIAN SAID, "HOW CAN IRAN BE RESPONSIBLE FOR GRUMMAN AND LITTON COST OVERRUNS AS REPORTED BY YOUR OWN U.S. PRESS?" HE THEN ASKED THE DEFENSE SECRETARY, THE IRANIAN VERSION CONTINUES, IF RUMSFELD THOUGHT HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY A FOOL.

7. ANGERED, RUMSFELD IS ALLEGED BY SOURCES TO HAVE SAID TO TOUFANIAN, "DON'T TRY AND GET AROUND ME. REMEMBER, KISSINGER AND I HAVE TO APPROVE ALL EXPORTS."

8. SINCE THAT EXCHANGE MORE THAN A YEAR AGO, THE SITUATION HAS NOT IMPROVED.

9. "IT'S RAW, IT'S AWFULLY RAW, MORE THAN ANYONE DARES SHOW," SAID AN INSIDER ON THE AMERICAN SIDE. HE WAS REFERRING TO IRAN'S WORSENING MOOD OVER ITS U.S. ARMS DEALINGS. SAID ANOTHER, "FROM THE WAY WE'VE BEHAVED, THEY'VE LOST ALL TRUST IN US."

10. FOR THE U.S. MILITARY, SALES TO IRAN HAVE BECOME A MAJOR INSTRUMENT OF FOREIGN POLICY. AMERICAN ARMS SALES TO IRAN HAVE TOTALED MORE THAN \$15 BILLION DURING THE PAST UNCLASSIFIED

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SIX YEARS, MAKING IRAN THE SINGLE LARGEST PURCHASER OF U.S. EQUIPMENT. MOST OF THE AMERICAN DEFENSE CONTRACTORS WHO WERE INVOLVED IN VIETNAM--COMPANIES LIKE HUGHES, LITTON, GRUMMAN, BELL--ARE DEEPLY INVOLVED IN IRAN AS WELL.

11. "IN IRAN, U.S. CONTRACTORS KNEW THEY HAD A SUCKER FOR A CUSTOMER," SAID A VETERAN INTELLIGENCE OFFICIAL. ARMS EXPERTS POINT OUT THAT WHILE IRAN'S ARMY IS WELL EQUIPPED AND WELL TRAINED, THE DOCTRINE OF U.S. FOREIGN MILITARY SALES HAS BEEN "SELL, SELL, SELL."

12. THE ATTEMPT TO USE ARMS DEALS TO HELP CORRECT THE CASH-FLOW IMBALANCE CREATED BY OIL PRICE RISES HAS "TOTALLY CONFUSED THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ARMS BALANCE AND A MILITARY BALANCE," THE SOURCE SAID. SUPERIORITY OF NUMBERS IS NOT SUPERIORITY OF PERFORMANCE, AS THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS HAVE PROVED.

13. YET, IF IRAN CLAIMS TO HAVE BEEN BURNED BY BAD DEALS, IT IS HARDLY SHY OF THE FIRE. THE SHAH IS PRESSING THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION FOR EVEN MORE ARMS THAN IRAN

RECEIVED UNDER PRESIDENT FORD.

14. PENDING DEALS INCLUDE IRAN'S PURCHASE OF 250 LAND-

BASED F-18 FIGHTERS FROM NORTHROP, THE NATION'S THIRD LARGEST DEFENSE CONTRACTOR, FOR AS MUCH AS \$4 BILLION--A CONTRACT NORTHROP PRESIDENT THOMAS V. JONES CLAIMS COULD DOUBLE HIS COMPANY'S SIZE BY 1984.

15. JUST LAST MONTH, WASHINGTON APPROVED A \$1.1 BILLION IRANIAN PURCHASE OF SEVEN BOEING 707 AIRLINERS FOR AN EARLY-WARNING SYSTEM KNOWN AS AWACS. THE PLANES CONTAIN THE MOST ADVANCED AIRBORNE WARNING AND CONTROL SYSTEMS.

16. IT WAS IN MAY 1972 THAT PRESIDENT NIXON, ON HIS WAY UNCLASSIFIED

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BACK WITH NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER HENRY KISSINGER FROM TALKS IN THE SOVIET UNION, LANDED IN TEHRAN FOR A 24-HOUR STOPOVER. IN AN UNPRECEDENTED DECISION, NIXON AGREED TO SELL THE SHAH THE HIGHLY ADVANCED F-14 FIGHTER PLANE AND ANY OTHER KIND OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS SYSTEMS. WITHIN A YEAR IRAN BECAME THE BAZAAR FOR AN AMERICAN ARMS BONANZA AS THE THREE MILITARY SERVICES AND ARMS SALESMEN CONVERGED ON TEHRAN.

17. "WHAT YOU HAD WERE CORPORATE EXPERTS WHOSE WHOLE PURPOSE WAS TO CONVINCE THE SHAH HE NEEDED EVERY WEAPONS THEY HAD IN THE SALES BROCHURE," SAID A HIGHLY PLACED PENTAGON SOURCE.

18. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JAMES SCHLESINGER SAW THE INEQUITY OF SELLING SOPHISTICATED HARDWARE TO A THIRD WORLD COUNTRY THAT COULD NOT ABSORB, OPERATE OR MAINTAIN IT. IN 1973 HE SENT RICHARD R. HALLOCK AS HIS PERSONAL BUT UNOFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE, AS "A KIND OF TECHNICAL INSPECTOR GENERAL" TO ADVISE THE SHAH ON WEAPONS PURCHASES, ACCORDING TO A KNOWLEDGEABLE ACCOUNT. HALLOCK IS THE MAN WHO GOT THE U.S. ARMY TO ADOPT THE M-16 RIFLE AND IS A RECOGNIZED AUTHORITY ON ORGANIZING INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES.

19. ALTHOUGH ONLY A RETIRED U.S. ARMY COLONEL, A CIVILIAN WITH NO OFFICIAL POSITION, HALLOCK WAS PUT TO WORK ON IRAN'S MOST SENSITIVE DEFENSE PROJECTS--THE STRATEGIC TAILORING PLAN, AN OVERALL DEFENSE SYSTEM, MAINLY FOR THE AIR FORCE; PROJECT SEEK SENTRY, AN AIR DEFENSE RADAR NETWORK; SEEK SWITCH, A MULTI-BILLION-DOLLAR INTEGRATED CIVILIAN-MILITARY TELEPHONE SYSTEM; IBEX, A COMMERCIAL ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM OPERATED WITH CIA HELP.

20. THE SPECIFICATIONS FOR SEEK SENTRY WERE WRITTEN BY THE SHAH HIMSELF. THEY REQUIRED THAT RADARS, ABLE TO PICK UNCLASSIFIED

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UP OBJECTS FLYING AS LOW AS 500 FEET BE PLACED ON 41 MOUNTAINTOPS IN IRAN. THE PROGRAM WAS TO HAVE COST \$32 BILLION AND WOULD HAVE OVERSTRETCHED IRAN'S MANPOWER AND TECHNICAL CAPACITY, TEHRAN AND PENTAGON INSIDERS SAY.

21. JUST AS HE HAD WITH IBEX AND SEEK SWITCH, HALLOCK CUT SEEK SENTRY WAY BACK. "HE REDUCED IT BY A WHOLE ORDER OF MAGNITUDE," SAID MAJ. GEN. ALTON SLAY, HEAD OF THE U.S. AIR FORCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

22. AT EVERY MEETING THE SHAH HAD WITH TOUFANIAN AND U.S. AMBASSADOR RICHARD HELMS REGARDING TOP-SECRET PROJECTS, HALLOCK WAS PRESENT. FOR THE U.S. MILITARY MISSION IN TEHRAN, WHICH HAD ALWAYS BEEN THE CHIEF INFLUENCE IN ARMS-SALES MATTERS, THE EXCLUSION BRED BITTERNESS.

23. IN SEPTEMBER 1975, AN OFFICIAL SENIOR CIVILIAN REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE PENTAGON ARRIVED. HE WAS ERIC VON MARBOD, A FORMER PENTAGON COMPTROLLER. HALLOCK DID NOT ENJOY BEING DISPLACED. "IT WAS LIKE TYING TWO CATS TOGETHER BY THEIR TAILS AND HANGING THEM OVER A CLOTHESLINE," SAID A PENTAGON SOURCE.

24. THE ONE THING THAT REMAINED UNCHANGED WAS THE CONDUCT OF AMERICAN ARMS CONTRACTORS, WHO CONGRESSIONAL SOURCES AAY WERE "WILDLY OUT OF CONTROL."

25. FOR EXAMPLE, IN SEPT. 1976, JONES, NORTHROP'S PRESIDENT, GOT TOUFANIAN TO SIGN A LETTER TO THE PENTAGON SAYING IRAN WANTED TO BUY 250 F-18 FIGHTERS. EXPERTS SAY THIS WAS PRACTICALLY A DUPLICATION OF IRAN'S ALREADY EXISTING ORDER FOR 160 F-16S, FOR WHICH IRAN IS PAYING \$9 BILLION. "THEY'RE A COMPARABLE AIRPLANE," SAID A U.S. AIR FORCE GENERAL.

26. "IT'S LIKE VIETNAM," A FORMER CONSULTANT FOR NORTHROP UNCLASSIFIED

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SAID. "FIRST WE SELL IT TO THEM, THEY DON'T WORK IT AS WELL AS WE DO, SO WE END UP OPERATING IT OURSELVES."

27. THERE ARE SERIOUS ALLEGATIONS THAT U.S. CONTRACT PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN PAST IRANIAN MILITARY OPERATIONS.

28. IN TEHRAN, SEVERAL CONTRACTOR SOURCES CLAIMED THAT U.S. AND BRITISH PILOTS, WHILE SUPPOSEDLY ADVISORS, AC- TAUALLY FLEW CLOSE GROUND SUPPORT IN THE KURDISH REBELLION

AGAINST IRAQ AND HAVE BEEN FLYING SPY FLIGHTS OVER THE WAR ZONE OF OMAN. DISGUISED AS TRAINING MISSIONS, THE PLANES

USED WERE F-14S, SOME OF THOSE SOLD TO IRAN UNDER A GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT MILITARY SALES CONTRACT DATING FROM 1975.

29. IT WAS THAT KIND OF PLANE THAT WAS SHOT DOWN BY A ROCKET OVER SOUTH YEMEN NOV. 27, 1976. IRAN IMMEDIATELY CLAIMED PILOT ERROR ON A TRAINING MISSION AND DEMANDED IMMEDIATE RETURN OF THE CREW AND WRECKAGE. "THERE COULD WELL HAVE BEEN AN AMERICAN PILOT ON THAT PLANE," SAID A FORMER CONSULTANT FOR NORTHROP IN TEHRAN. THERE WERE RUMORS IN THE CAPITAL THAT THE PILOT WAS INDEED AMERICAN.

30. THE PENTAGON HAS DENIED THE ALLEGATIONS, SAYING IT SAW NO REASON TO DISAGREE WITH A RECENT U.S. SENATE STUDY OF ARMS SALES TO IRAN THAT SAID NO AMERICAN PERSONNEL HAD EVER BEEN INVOLVED IN COMBAT FOR THE IRANIANS.

31. YET A TOP STAFFER ON A CONGRESSIONAL INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE SAID, WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE ALLEGATIONS, "I HAVE EVIDENCE, BUT WE CAN'T, I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD, GIVE YOU EVIDENCE OF THAT KIND."

32. MEANWHILE, IRANIAN INDIGNATION WITH THE ARMS SITUATION HAS CONTINUED TO GROW. IN TEHRAN THIS YEAR. GEN. TOUFANIAN WAS CLAIMING THAT IT COST \$100,000 A YEAR MERELY TO GET A LOW-LEVEL U.S. AIRCRAFT MECHANIC TO STAY AND WORK IN IRAN.

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33. THERE WAS ALSO SHOCKED ANGER OVER INCREDIBLE, UNANTICIPATED PRICE RISES. IN A 15-MONTH PERIOD AMERICAN INFLATION HAD CAUSED A \$2 BILLION ADDITIONAL CHARGE ON ARMS BILLS THAT ALREADY TOTALED \$10.4 BILLION. IN ANOTHER INSTANCE, JUST THREE MONTHS AFTER GENERAL DYNAMICS HAD QUOTED A \$2.1 BILLION FIGURE FOR 300 F-16 AIRCRAFT IN 1975 DOLLARS, THE PENTAGON UPPED THE PRICE TO \$8.8 BILLION FOR ONLY 160 OF THE F-16S. AS A RESULT, IRAN ANGRILY DEMANDED THAT THE CONTRACT BE RENEGOTIATED.

34. ACCORDING TO A SOURCE WHO SAW THE UNEDITED TAPE, WHEN BARBARA WALTERS WAS INTERVIEWING THE SHAH FOR AN ABC-TV SPECIAL, SHE MENTIONED AMERICAN ARMS MERCHANTS, AND THE SHAH LOST HIS TEMPER. THE PROGRAM HAD TO BE POSTPONED WHILE THE SCENE WAS EDITED OUT.

35. TO CRITICS OF MILITARY PROCUREMENT, THE SHAH'S DISSATISFACTION COMES AS NO SURPRISE. THEY CHARGE THAT PENTAGON PROGRAMS HAVE HABITUALLY BEEN MISMANAGED.

SEN. WILLIAM PROXMIRE (D-WIS.) CLAIMED THAT AS OF JUNE 1971, FOR EXAMPLE, COST OVERRUNS ON SOME 45 MAJOR WEAPONS

SYSTEMS AMOUNTED TO \$35 BILLION.

36. ECONOMIST SEYMOUR MELMAN, ANOTHER CRITIC, HAS WRITTEN: "THE QUALITY OF PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT IN THE MILITARY INDUSTRY AND THE QUALITY OF ITS PRODUCTS ARE FOR THE MOST PART A CLOSED BOOK, INACCESSIBLE TO OUTSIDERS."

37. ACCORDING TO A TOP CONGRESSIONAL STAFFER, "THE CHIEF DEFECT OF FOREIGN MILITARY SALES IS THAT TO THIS DAY UNCLASSIFIED

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THERE IS NO MECHANISM OF INSPECTION FOR QUALITY." ONE OF HIS COLLEAGUES ADDED, "AMERICA'S INSPECTION SYSTEM IS COMPLETELY INEFFECTIVE."

38. WHERE, FOR INSTANCE, THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE INSPECTS GRAIN SOLD OVERSEAS TO GUARANTEE ITS QUALITY, THE ONLY THING THAT STANDS BEHIND ANY ARMS DEAL IS THE WORD OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. "IT'S A SYSTEM DESIGNED BY CONTRACTORS TO SCREW THE IRANIANS," SAID AN INTELLIGENCE VETERAN.

39. TO MANY AMERICANS, THE U.S. ARMS RELATIONSHIP WITH IRAN SIMPLY REFLECTS "THE WHOLE PROBLEM OF TRYING TO DO BUSINESS OVERSEAS," IN THE WORDS OF AN AMERICAN WHO HAS DEALT IN IRAN FOR 20 YEARS. COMMISSIONS AND KICKBACKS TO MIDDLEMEN TO GET ORDERS "ARE PART OF THE NORMAL WAY BUSINESS IS DONE" THERE, HE SAID.

40. "YOU'RE A FOOL IF YOU GO INTO A FOREIGN COUNTRY AND TRY TO REFORM THE STANDARD," HE ADDED.

41. MOST AMERICAN ARMS CONTRACTORS ARE AVOIDING THE ANTI-BRIBERY SCRUTINY OF FEDERAL REGULATORY AGENCIES BY USING EUROPEAN SUBSIDIARIES TO MAKE THE QUESTIONABLE PAYMENTS TO MIDDLEMEN. ACCORDING TO A TOP OFFICIAL AT ROCKWELL INTERNATIONAL, "THE U.S. COMPANY MAKES A TOTAL BID ON A JOB IN IRAN, EXCEPT ITS BID PRICE INCLUDES THE PRICE OF A 3 TO 5 PER CENT PAYOFF."

42. A FORMER IRANIAN BANK AUDITOR CLAIMS THAT THE PAYOFF ON CORPORATE ARMS ORDERS IS MUCH HIGHER. "IN PRIVATE ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN AGENTS AND THE SUBSIDIARY OF THE PARENT COMPANY, AGENTS MAKE AS MUCH AS 20 TO 40 PER CENT OF THE CONTRACT COST," HE SAID.

43. ACCORDING TO THE ROCKWELL OFFICIAL, IT IS THE UNCLASSIFIED

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EUROPEAN SUBSIDIARY, THAT WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF ITS

AMERICAN PARENT COMPANY MAKES CONTACT WITH THE "FOREIGN INDIVIDUALS" WHO ACCEPT THE KICKBACKS.

44. "THE GENIUS OF THE SYSTEM IS THAT THE U.S. COMPANY DOES NOT GET INVOLVED. IT KNOWS THE BIDS OF ITS EUROPEAN SUBCONTRACTOR ARE INFLATED, BUT IT ACCEPTS THE PADDED FIGURES. THAT WAY THEIR OWN AUDIT WILL BE ACCEPTABLE TO U.S. AUTHORITIES," THE ROCKWELL OFFICIAL SAID.

45. SUCH KICKBACKS ARE OFTEN ADDED BACK INTO THE OVERALL PRICES OF ARMS CONTRACTS, ACCORDING TO PENTAGON SOURCES.

46. IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS, TOUFANIAN HAS CLAIMED THAT IF AN AMERICAN ARMS COMPANY CAN AFFORD COMMISSION FEES SUCH AS THE \$4.5 MILLION PAID TO ABLOMATH MAHVI FOR LANDING THE IBEX CONTRACT, IRAN IS HARDLY GETTING ITS ARMS AT THE LOWEST POSSIBLE PRICE.

47. U.S. OFFICIALS CLAIM THAT THEY ARE SUBJECT TO MANY DISCUSSIONS THAT BEGIN WITH AN IRANIAN MIDDLEMAN SAYING SUCH THINGS AS "IT'S A SHAME THIS IS DRAGGING OUT SO LONG. IF I ONLY HAD 'X' AMOUNT OF DOLLARS, I COULD HAVE THE PROBLEM CLEARED UP IN TWO WEEKS." "IT'S TIME TO TAKE YOUR HAT AND HIT THE ROAD WHEN YOU HEAR THAT KIND OF TALK," SAID THE VETERAN BUSINESSMAN.

48. SOME PENTAGON OFFICIALS, RECOGNIZING THAT MILITARY SALES ARE A MAJOR ASPECT OF IRANIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS, CLAIM THAT THINGS ARE COMING UNDER CONTROL, THANKS TO THE U.S. ARMS CONTROL AND EXPORTS ACT, WHICH POLICES ALL ARMS SALES IN EXCESS OF \$25 MILLION.

49. PENTAGON OPTIMISM IGNORES SUCH CASES AS NORTHROP'S JONES, WHO "WITH HIS GIFT FOR BUILDING APPETITES" AS A UNCLASSIFIED

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PENTAGON OFFICIAL PUT IT, GOT IRAN TO STATE THAT IT WAS READY TO SPEND \$4 BILLION FOR A PLANE IT DID NOT NEED. THIS ALARMED PENTAGON OFFICIALS SO MUCH THAT THEY ASKED FOR THE ASSISTANCE OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE TO TRY TO STOP THE SALE.

50. OTHER U.S. OFFICIALS SAY THE OUTLOOK IS GLOOMY. SAID THE INTELLIGENCE VETERAN, A LONG-TIME OBSERVER OF IRAN, "OUR RELATIONS ARE MUCH MORE STRAINED THAN THEY SHOW, AND ALL BECAUSE OF SOME DAMNED ARMS SALESMEN."

51. "I WISH," SAID A RETIRED U.S. AIR FORCE GENERAL INVOLVED IN IRAN, "BOTH SIDES WOULD BE ABOVE-BOARD."
(END TEXT.) CHRISTOPHER

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